



News Release

Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency

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IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 20, 2002

X-45A CONTINUES TO EXPAND FLIGHT ENVELOPE

The first X-45A Unmanned Combat Air Vehicle (UCAV) technology demonstrator completed its sixth flight yesterday. During the flight, the vehicle raised its landing gear in flight for the first time.

The X-45A flew for 40 minutes and reached an airspeed of 195 knots and an altitude of 7,500 feet. For the first time, the vehicle took off and landed on the hard surface runway at Edwards Air Force Base, Calif. The move to the Edwards runway came as the Air Force Flight Test Center acknowledged the level of UCAV system maturity and reliability, and its ability to operate in the dynamic Edwards airfield environment with other manned and unmanned aircraft. Previous test flights had used the dry lake bed.

The DARPA/U.S. Air Force/Boeing UCAV program is focused on rapidly fielding a weapon system that integrates distributed adaptive control technology and robust communications with a next generation unmanned stealth platform. The X-45A is demonstrating the technical feasibility of the UCAV concept. The program is now designing two more operationally representative robust prototypes that will demonstrate the military utility and operational value of the UCAV system.

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Media with questions, please contact Jan Walker, (703) 696-2404, or jwalker@darpa.mil. Photos of the flight will be available on the web at www.darpa.mil/ucav.